

resolution approved May 16, 1957 (36 U.S.C. 120), has designated the third Friday in May of each year as "National Defense Transportation Day" and, by joint resolution approved May 14, 1962 (36 U.S.C. 133), declared that the week in which that Friday falls be designated "National Transportation Week."

**Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton,** President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Friday, May 21, 1999, as National Defense Transportation Day and May 16 through May 22, 1999, as National Transportation Week. I urge all Americans to observe these occasions with appropriate ceremonies, programs, and activities.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this seventeenth day of May, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-third.

**William J. Clinton**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:25 a.m., May 18, 1999]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on May 19.

### **Remarks Prior to Discussions With King Abdullah II of Jordan and an Exchange With Reporters**

*May 18, 1999*

**President Clinton.** Well, let me just begin by saying how delighted I am to have His Majesty here today. The United States values our relationship with Jordan very much. We hope to have a discussion about the opportunity and the obligation we have to continue the peace process in the Middle East. I think we've both talked to Prime Minister-elect Barak about that.

And we are also very much committed to Jordan's economic renewal. And the supplemental appropriation bill now working its way through the Congress has, among other things, \$100 million in support for Jordan, and I believe it will pass in the next few days, so I'm very encouraged by that.

And I'm delighted to have you here, Your Majesty.

### **Israeli Election and Middle East Peace Process**

**Q.** What would be the first step, Mr. President, towards a renewal, a revival of the peace process? Do you have anything in mind, I mean, have you set any dates?

**President Clinton.** No. Well, we have to, first of all, await the formation of a government in Israel. They probably have only known for a few hours what the distribution of the vote is by parties, in terms of what the composition of the Knesset will be. And so I think General Barak is entitled to a few days to put a government together.

**Q.** Why do you have so many hopes about this? I mean, why are you suddenly encouraged?

**President Clinton.** Well, I think that, clearly, the whole issue of the peace process was an issue; and I think because of his military service, the question of General Barak's devotion to the security of Israel is not in question. But he has evidenced an intention to continue the peace process. And if he's willing to do it, I think that we're certainly both willing to do it and we're hopeful that we'll have a chance to do so.

**Q.** Mr. President, what can the United States do to help further this peace process at this point?

**President Clinton.** Well, we have an accord at Wye to implement and we have a lot of work to do on the final status issues. I think the roadmap is out there. And we'll do what we've always done. I've been working at this for 6 years, and I'm looking forward to continuing. I'll do what I have done under all the previous leadership of Israel and what we have worked very closely with Jordan to do.

### **Jordanian Economy**

**Q.** Mr. President, the U.S. and you, personally, have been very supportive to Jordan in the past few months. What immediate plans do you have now to help Jordan's economy, in addition to the \$100 million?

**President Clinton.** Well, that's what—we're going to have a conversation about that. I hope that Jordan can receive some relief on its debt problem from other countries. The United States has already done about all we can on that; we've done quite a bit.

But I think other nations could do more to help Jordan, and I know His Majesty has been working on that. And I would like to see more action on that, and I will do what I can to support that.

#### **Apache Helicopters in Kosovo**

**Q.** Why is the United States, sir, stalling the use of Apache helicopters in Kosovo?

**President Clinton.** Well, first of all, I think that's a mischaracterization. This is a military campaign with clear objectives. And military leaders will make their decisions about when and under what circumstances to use the Apaches. As General Clark and others have made clear, when the weather is good, as it generally is at this time of year, most of what the Apaches could do can be done with the A-10s at less risk.

But those are judgments there being made; I don't really understand this implication that the United States is stalling. They're a military asset that's there; they're there to be used under appropriate circumstances when the military commanders decide that it should be done. It's not a political decision in any way, and it should not be.

#### **Ground Troops**

**Q.** With the air war now in its second month, are you giving more consideration to ground troops?

**President Clinton.** Well, first of all, I think the air war has accomplished quite a bit, and there's a lot more that it can accomplish. I, and everyone else, has always said that we intend to see our objectives achieved and that we have not, and will not, take any option off the table.

But we are making progress, and I am convinced that we will achieve our objectives one way or the other. And I'm very hopeful, obviously, that the diplomatic efforts that are being made in the State Department and with the Russians will bear some fruit. But if they do not, we will continue to press ahead. But I do believe that they've done an excellent job and—now over 20,000 sorties—a great deal of what we have been trying to accomplish has been done. I don't think that we or our Allies should take any options off the table and that has been my position from the beginning, but we ought

to stay with the strategy we have and work it through to the end.

#### **Jordan-U.S. Relations/Middle East Peace Process**

**Q.** Your Majesty, what do you hope your talks with the President will result in? And do you think the climate in Israel now is more conducive to making progress in the peace process?

**King Abdullah.** Well, I think we have many issues to discuss with the President, and one of the main things is to thank the overwhelming support that the President has shown Jordan over the many years, but especially with the passing away of His Majesty. And again, the President went out of his way, and the American administration and government, to support us through this very difficult time.

Vis-a-vis, obviously, the elections in Israel were very, very optimistic. I just had the opportunity to speak to Prime Minister-elect Barak and wish him well. And we had the opportunity of seeing him in Jordan only several days ago, and we see eye-to-eye on many issues and we're very optimistic of taking the peace process forward.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:57 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister-elect Ehud Barak of Israel; and Gen. Wesley K. Clark, USA, Supreme Allied Commander Europe. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

#### **Statement on Withdrawal of the Nomination of Brian Atwood To Be Ambassador to Brazil**

*May 18, 1999*

Today Brian Atwood asked me to withdraw his nomination to be the United States Ambassador to Brazil. I have accepted his request with reluctance and regret.

Few people in public life have better combined the qualities of professional competence and moral purpose. Brian Atwood has served with distinction as Administrator